

By Hugh Thomas

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No cotton, no work

By Jasper Ridley

NORMAN LONGMATE:

The Hungry Mills
The Story of the Lancashire Cotton
Famine 1861-1865
319pp. Temple Smith. £7.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, an unparalleled industrial development took place in Lancashire which transformed the landscape and life of the county, brought admiring foreigners to Manchester, and made possible the production of fabrics which clothed all classes of the British people and boosted British exports. The industry depended on cotton produced by negro slaves in the Southern states of America. The planters who owned the slaves were confident that the economic importance of cotton would enable them to defeat the growing campaign in the Northern states for the abolition of slavery. "You dare not make war on cotton... Cotton is King", said a pro-slavery senator in Washington in 1858.

Three years later, the government of the United States did make war on cotton, and in the process of preserving the Union and destroying slavery brought economic ruin to Lancashire. At first, both the Lancashire mill-owners and the British Foreign Secretary, Lord John Russell, were optimistic: they did not believe that the inadequate United States Navy could effectively blockade the 3,000 miles of coastline of the rebel Confederate states and thus prevent the export of cotton to Liverpool. They had overlooked the fact, as Norman Longmate points out in *The Hungry Mills*, that, as cotton could only be carried in large quantities from ports with suitable loading facilities, the Northern navy needed only to blockade about 500 miles of this coastline. The North rapidly increased its naval strength, and scuttled ships loaded with cotton in the entrances of the Southern ports, disregarding the protests of European neutrals that this was a violation of international law. By the

winter of 1862-63, thousands of Lancashire cotton operatives were on the verge of starvation, and notices were appearing at the mills: "No cotton, no work."

Mr Longmate has followed his earlier book on nineteenth-century English workhouses with this absorbing study of the Lancashire cotton famine of 1861-65 and the reaction of the British government and people to it. He points out that it is a happier story than the history of the workhouse, being, on the whole, a tale of man's humanity, not inhumanity, to man. The official and public reaction to the distress in Lancashire was very different from the attitude adopted at the time of the great hunger in Ireland in 1847; for the first time, influential people questioned the Protestant liberal ethic that it was both sin and economically disastrous to give charitable relief to the poor. A great change had taken place in the conscience of the rich during the fifteen years in which they had witnessed the Irish famine, the upheavals of 1848, and the Crimean War; and even the most conventional country parson and professor of political economy found it difficult to argue that poverty was caused by the vice and indolence of the pauper, when everyone knew that the destitution of the hitherto industrious Lancashire workman was solely due to the Civil War in America.

Norman Longmate tells the story of the conflicting attitudes to relief of the politicians and Poor Law authorities in London and the different areas of Lancashire. Some still adhered to the principles of their predecessors: thirty years on, the laissez-faire policy of the Poor Law authorities was still being defended. Others, however, were more sympathetic to the plight of the Lancashire cotton workers. The latter group included the Liberal Party, the Nonconformist movement, and the Fabian Society. The latter group included the Liberal Party, the Nonconformist movement, and the Fabian Society. The latter group included the Liberal Party, the Nonconformist movement, and the Fabian Society.

The battle of the registers

By Boyd Hilton

JOHN PREST:
Politics in the Age of Cobden
165pp. Macmillan. £7.95.

In an exciting but unconvincing article *Historical Journal* Volume 9 (1966) Cressy M. Jones suggested that the 1832 Reform Act was about boundaries as much as votes, about interests as much as individuals. In his view, the Whigs were seeking to defuse tension between town and country, and to restore cohesion within each sector by separating the two interests rigidly at constituency level.

Moore's trump card was the first Bill's treatment of certain borough freeholders, whose alleged penetration of the counties was threatening the integrity of the franchise. In the event, the Whigs decided to let these freeholders vote in the counties after all, in order to counterbalance the tenants-at-will enfranchised by the Chancery Bill, but nevertheless to keep the policy of de-facto exclusion of the counties from the franchise.

John Prest rejects this version of Whig motives in 1832, but his fascinating study of the electoral politics in the next two decades employs the same categories. He sees these years as a battle over registration which the Reform Act had stimulated. It became "in the eyes of contemporaries" "a struggle between the 500 tenants-at-will who were regarded as the garrisons of the Tory strongholds in the shires, and the 510 householders, who formed the rank and file of the Reformers' clouds in the mediocrity of the towns." The Tories triumphed in 1841 by exploiting, as

Peel exhorted them to do, the new registration opportunities. "They recovered through the constituencies," the reformers wrongly interpreted the Tory tactics as a cunning abuse of the iniquitous Chancery Bill. But for all its ingenuity and tactical insights, when it comes to explaining political motives, Prest's argument suffers (as does Moore's) from the neglect of correspondence. (In this respect, Derek Hender's *League in the Politics of Electoral Pressure* is far more successful.) Nor does it quite establish his case that the war in the constituencies and the line in Parliament (which is what Moore said the Whigs were aiming at), with party too well that the struggle was largely a function of the party's internal divisions. Moreover, he does not always distinguish between what actually happened and what contemporaries actually thought.

Although scarcely any records of the proceedings of the House of Commons survive from 1832, a considerable volume has been preserved for the Tories in the decision since the judges had already cut the ground from under their feet (though later Prest says that they never forgave Peel for not having fought back in the battle of the registers). "To the question 'Who repealed the Corn Laws?' it is time to enter the name of Sir Nicholas Tindal. Hey presto!

This is a bold effort and one which works surprisingly well. It is refreshing to have an account of Tory resurgence with the usual platitudes of the Manifesto left well and truly behind. For all its ingenuity and tactical insights, when it comes to explaining political motives, Prest's argument suffers (as does Moore's) from the neglect of correspondence. (In this respect, Derek Hender's *League in the Politics of Electoral Pressure* is far more successful.) Nor does it quite establish his case that the war in the constituencies and the line in Parliament (which is what Moore said the Whigs were aiming at), with party too well that the struggle was largely a function of the party's internal divisions. Moreover, he does not always distinguish between what actually happened and what contemporaries actually thought.

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Respecting the feminine cycle

By Rosemary Dinneen

PENELOPE SHUTTLE and PETER REDGROVE:
The Wise Woman
Menstruation and Everywoman
335pp. Gollancz. £7.95.

In a broadcast talk a few years ago on language and its effect, Margaret Drabble mentioned the poverty of words relating to menstruation; and, in an official, it seems, took her to task for mentioning the subject. In spite of our easy way with four-letter subjects, and the sexual explicitness of fiction, and although children are shown films on child abuse, men accompany their wives into the labour ward; still we have, it seems, kept something of one of the oldest and strongest taboos. From one culture after another the anthropologists have reported beliefs in the peculiarly polluting nature of the menstruating woman: how her glance casts a bad spell, her touch and even her shadow are impure; how the River of Death runs through her; how she must be kept apart, not allowed to prepare food nor, of course, to have sexual intercourse.

It is a worldwide bowl of hatred for womanhood? Male fear and envy of the dramas of the female body certainly play a part, as Penelope Shuttle and Peter Redgrove insist. But the tabooed is also close to the sacred: special power is ascribed, whether used for good or bad ends. The visible fertility of woman reflects and influences that of the earth: but at the times when the embodied fertility she is bad news; very bad news, in fact—the authors devastatingly quote Pliny: "If... they happen to approach or go over a vessel of wine, be it never so new, it will presently sour; if they touch any strand of corn in the field, it will wither and come to no good. Also, let them handle any grasses, they will die upon it; the herbs and young buds in a garden, if they do but pass by, will catch a blight, and burne away to nothing. So they upon or under trees... the fruit which hanged upon them will fall. One they but see themselves in a looking glass, the clear brightness thereof turneth into dimness, upon their very sight... The very bees in the hive die. Yron and steel presently take rust, yes, and brass likewise, with a filthy, strong, and poisoned stynke, if they but lay hand thereupon."

(According to Robert Graves's account of the same passage) these early creatures can also rid a field of pests, calm a storm at sea, and cure boils, erysipelas, hydrophobia, and barrenness. Perhaps Shuttle and Redgrove do not consider the possibility—in more primitive cultures such apparitions monstrous taboos may even be observed.

Warding off the plague

By Peter Burke

CARLO M. CIPOLLA:
The Plague and the Florentine
1590-1630. Bologna: Il Mulino. L3,500.

Carlo M. Cipolla seems to have muddled down. After wide-ranging comparative studies of the history of plague, cannon, ships, clocks, and literacy, he has lately concentrated his attention on disease and medicine in Italy in the early modern period, following his *Public Health and the Medical Profession in the Renaissance* (1976), and now with the present book.

Old Rippe's *raistelli* a Monte Lupo? In Cipolla's second study, concentrating this time on Montepulciano, a community which contained 600 to 700 inhabitants and was "ruined" by courtesy of the plague, rather than its population figures. After it was visited by the

have given women a sense of role and named power. What is certain is that today, when we are far too enlightened to keep women away from the young buds and the taboo is more sickly and insidious thing, tricking women into hating their own nature. Advertisements for pre-Tampax towels used to go in for soft-focus greenery and floating chiffon, always a sign that something nasty is being sold. No sacredness or sanctity now, but more probably associations with uncontrolled excretion, with illness and dirt, and above all a vestigial fear at the way in which nature insists, stronger than concrete and plastic and steel, in pumping her energies through human flesh. Even on farms they order things better these days: cows are artificially inseminated, chickens grown in batteries. But women are incorrigible. They bleed, so the body is a conduit, and will die.

Shuttle and Redgrove attack their despised subject with exuberance and inexhaustible ingenuity, making the occasion for an assertion of the marvellous basis of all human culture. Whether *The Wise Woman* is a feminist book, however, I am not sure, since its theme is not "why can't a woman be more like a man?"—managing a bank, the children in the twenty-first century, or the inconvenient menses dealt with by the Pili or surgical section—but woman queening it: Queen of the Night and ministering angel, bad bitch and wise witch. For all its body excursions into doctress the book speaks with revolutionary authority; starting from the proposition that even the one would think—most boring part of femaleness is fruitful and complex, it branches out in all directions; just how far, the briefest summary will show.

From a typically felicitous opening—'Thy navel is like a round globe, which waxes not liquor / thy belly is like a heap of wheat set about with miles'—Shuttle and Redgrove start in with some physiology, set in the context of their central theme: that the female cycle, patterns for every woman of time, has an "eros" and a "logos" component in the ovulatory and menstrual phases respectively; that only the former has been sanctioned by the laws of the social world, but that the latter has a private kind of creativity of its own, though soured by social disapproval into resentment and pain. They argue eloquently though straight away we run into the kind of silliness that dogs the book: childbearing is like an orgasm, a woman's child can look more like her lover than its real father, the four physiological phases of the female cycle are like the lines of the crucifix and the points of the mandala—and so on. They go on to discuss the "menstrual epidemic": the troubles that beset modern women throughout the perimenstrual, and the vicious circle of disgust and irritation that runs from a woman's body to her mind and back. They remark that this must be powerfully communicated to young children, and that the literature ignores it entirely.

They branch off into a survey of the male ritual of menstruation, the loss of blood, which have been lost in envious imitation of female biology. Margaret Mead, Bruno Bettelheim are brought in for support, and anthropological studies which have found a positive relationship between the punitive, aggressive elements in a culture and the strength of its menstrual taboo. Perhaps men go to war, the authors hazard, because they can shoot blood in no other way (unlikely); and if men's aggressiveness is outright bad, why is women's, as experienced during her "black" phase, somehow creative and good? Georg Grindeck the wild psychoanalyst appears with his theory that children, living at an level, are moved by the smell of their mothers' menstrual blood because it reminds them of their first breath and the smell of birth-blood. These certainly are, as Shuttle and Redgrove say, "sensitive and unexplored areas, some of them stern and difficult in their implications"; so is the assertion that women are particularly sexually responsive during menstruation.

All this, and we are only at the end of the second chapter. A Jungian perambulation follows: menstrual dreams, have they a special character? (there is some convincing evidence that they do); is this the time to dream about the anus, that fierce male accumbent in every woman that embodies Jung's way of describing bisexuality? Is the animus the "other husband" that the ancients said the menstrual woman belonged to? And on to the Holy Grail as menstrual symbol and the monthly cycle as crucifixion and resurrection.

Moon myths, moon rhythms, moon knowledge; the derivation of an extraordinary number of important words from a lunar root; moon cults in antiquity and their relation to the dark aspect of woman—Kali, Hecate (the authors' reliance on Jungian explanations perhaps leads them to underestimate the obvious prototype of dark goddesses in our own bad, frustrating mothers). Erotic states and menstruation: did they learn to control their periods, by a kind of self-hypnosis, into synchronization with the time of the full moon when they had to dream occult dreams and speak prophecies? By many devices the authors arrive eventually at the dating of all social organization from the changeover from oestrus cycle to menstrual cycle for evolutionary change from

the oestrus cycle [in animals] to menstrual cycle implies that sexual libido became available for something other than the perpetuation of the species by the reproduction of offspring. . . . From the appearance of the menstrual cycle therefore dates all the evolutionary developments which have since succeeded in making human: viz the development of mentality, symbolism (a "menstrual child" is a symbolic child), recognition and valuing of the

individual, and social organization. And for good measure the authors add with chapters relating to witchcraft and witchhunts, and to contemporary horror films, in particular *The Exorcist*.

All this material, inchoate as it sounds, is well organized, annotated, and written in an engaging and lucid style. This is not to say that anthropologists, scientists and historians are likely to find it "sound"; even the general reader has to protest from time to time. Menstrual discomfort is not likely to be the result of social attitudes when even girls in the gentle society of Samoa, according to Margaret Mead, experienced it. Has the culture been "proved" to be sensually superior to the penis, or is this rampant, imitative sexism? Menstrual blood probably does not smell like the fresh blood spilt during birth. The "beautiful swamp-back, Fellows, tubs" sound nice, but who but the surgeon has ever seen them?—and how could the humped Celtic gods therefore have been symbolic of them? And so on. And very seriously, the great sacred stones revered in many

cultures, sometimes taken as phallic and said by Shuttle and Redgrove to be female symbols, were often surely intended to be both, in represent the point of junction?

And yet the book is exhilarating even where it soars off into fantasy. The trouble is that with so much to say—the "mountain of corroborative evidence that . . . [can] restore to the feminine cycle its lost respect"—there are really three books here that do not quite connect: a plea for the lifting of the sky modern taboo that has misled women themselves into disliking their own body-life; an examination of the immense subject of the menstrual background that has stimulated men into "giving birth" to cultural and artistic forms; and a theory, short on corroborative evidence, that the period is a time of high sexuality and creativity—that the menstruating woman "has meditations to do, dream-battles in the dream-country to fight on behalf of us all". So she may, but I should like to know more about them, and look forward very much to Penelope Shuttle's forthcoming book about her own dream-country.

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Wife to Gertrude Stein

By Gabriele Annan

LINDA SIMON:
The Biography of Alice B. Toklas
334pp. Peter Owen. £8.50.

In 1908, on a hill near Fiesole, Gertrude Stein, then aged thirty-four, proposed to Alice B. Toklas, who was two years younger. After that they lived as man and wife in Paris and Savoy until Gertrude's death in 1946. The main new fact that emerges in this book about their union is that the wife wore the trousers to a greater extent than some of their friends and acquaintances supposed.

Perhaps a slight shift of emphasis in the accepted idea of the Stein/Toklas relationship is all that could have been expected, since it is already so well documented. We have Gertrude Stein's *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, *Everybody's Autobiography*, and *Wars I Have Seen*; as all these are about herself and therefore about Alice as well; and just as she herself comes into almost everything she wrote (there never was such an egotist) so does Alice—and Alice holds sway, of course, in the love poetry. Then there are Alice's *What Is Remembered* and her letters after Gertrude's death (but full of Gertrude) collected under the title *Staying On Alone*. There are several biographies of Gertrude Stein and both women figure in many contemporary memoirs and autobiographies—mostly by Americans with a Paris period in their lives.

Linda Simon's bibliography makes one realize that the Stein industry in America has nothing to fear from their expanding Bloomsbury industry. She has worked hard at picking out every possible reference to Alice, and it seems a shame that she did not have more unpublished material to draw on. For a book with so much work in it, hers contains very little writing. (Am I beginning to sound like Stein? It is very difficult not to, once you get in her orbit.) It would be unfair to Linda Simon's *The Biography of Alice B. Toklas* to say that she confines herself to interpolation like "he told her" "she thought" or occasionally more elaborate interjections like "he murmured" but there would be some truth in the charge. Her most original contribution is the appendix she calls "An Annotated Gertrude Stein": here she supplements Richard Bridgman's exegesis of Stein's work, *Gertrude Stein in Pieces*, with special reference to Alice: "It may be, after all, that Alice is hidden in the penals of the prose." What she finds there is nearly all dew-drops—no granitic

or canker; everything confirms the picture of a very happy marriage based on strong erotic foundations, helped along by mutual give and take, though naturally punctuated by the odd fit of sulks.

In their division of labour, driving (dangerously) was the only chore Gertrude undertook. Alice ran the two houses and coped with all arrangements like travel and finance. She typed Gertrude's work, and when no one would publish it, she turned herself into a publisher and brought it out. She acted as impresario on Gertrude's lecture tours through America and Europe. She sat silent while Gertrude spoke forth in her Paris salon, and she kept control over who was admitted there: she was fiercely jealous, and she forced Gertrude to drop anyone who aroused her jealousy. The rows and broken friendships make a long catalogue; Hemingway was an early casualty, Virgil Thomson, Thornton Wilder, and Francis Rose almost the sole survivors until and after Gertrude's death. The title for one of Gertrude's works, *Before the Flood*, of Friendship Fades, was aptly chosen by Alice who had overheard the phrase in a restaurant.

Not everyone mistook the silent presence in Gertrude's salon for a meek slave; Fraunce Glot (this

is Linda Simon's spelling) found Alice sinister; Francis Rose recognized that "she was really the power behind the throne"; W. G. Rogers said: "To find out what happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable object, it was necessary merely to watch these two"; and Boving Ima summed up Alice as Gertrude's "sieve and bucket". Gertrude herself wrote: "I can be as stupid as I like because my wife is always right."

Apart from their complementary natures, Gertrude and Alice shared a common background: emancipated Jewish upper-middle class West Coast America. Linda Simon chronicles what Alice did before she met Gertrude as well as what Alice did next: but it would have been nice to have this unusual milieu filled in with a little more social history or genre painting. Their flight from it was perhaps the strongest bond between the two women—who made each recognize a kindred soul in the other. Both had felt stifled and frustrated and had come to Paris because they understood it was the place for people who needed to do their own thing. Alice had not even found her own thing; it was to be being Gertrude's mate. Gertrude's thing was understanding and collecting (more than discovering) modern



Alice B. Toklas; from Linda Simon's biography reviewed here.

Death-march in the desert

By Colin Thubron

KEROP BEDOUKIAN:
The Urchin
An Armenian's Escape
186pp. John Murray. £4.95.

Of Kerop Bedoukian's family of Aleppo, Syria, only three survived the Armenian genocide. His father was killed; his mother and his sister were abandoned; his youngest sister was buried with his own hands. Every day of the death-march exposed the horrors that lie with the most terrible pages of the Bryce-Tommey report, the classic record of the Armenian genocide. Yet he tells his story with the vividness and the unsentimental candour of a child. In fact the boy's inventiveness about everything that was going on—most of it was appalling—is frequently distasteful. He rarely voices a sympathetic fascination with death; he is absolutely honest. The bland tone of his description becomes moving at the extreme moments. His burial of his sister is tellingly simple; so is his farewell to his father: "I still feel his goodbye kiss on both my cheeks. We parted. No one shed any tears."

The case of Elvas was typical. Without warning, the men were rounded up and executed. Soon after, the women and children were forced to trek southward in search of a new life. The death-march to nowhere was a desperate journey, a journey of thousands of others. In the Anti-Taurus mountains and beyond, they died

of exhaustion, starvation and exposure; they died of thirst and of Turkish peasants and Kurds; or they were picked off by the gendarmes who were supposed to be guarding them; or they committed suicide. Others, especially the younger or prettier women, were dragged away for slaves and concubines; many preferred death.

Kerop's mother, a natural leader, dominates the book. By sheer force of personality, she kept her dwindling clan together. They reached the Euphrates and trudged into the Syrian desert, still under the whips of the gendarmes. Finally they arrived at the castle town of Birejik, where they became weavers, for a pittance. Once the stress of the journey was over, bickering and selfishness divided them. But all through the last years of the war, they never left the borderline of starvation. When the British reached south-east Turkey, the family went to Aleppo, where Kerop and his mother found refuge. Even here he was not safe, and narrowly missed death at the hands of Arab rioters. Finally the Bedoukians, helped by relatives abroad, journeyed to Constantinople and Bulgaria—and at last emigrated to Canada.

The book's title, *The Urchin*, indicates a disconnection by the author (now a successful Montreal businessman) from the tattered emigrant boy he describes. And in general this boy is oddly unreal. His love for—and resentment of—his stu-

pendously dominant mother is half-submerged sub-theme of the book. There is a suggestion of anxiety for love and approval, but he is unable, further, to express himself, and so the years—resolved themselves into cardboard phrases.

Another writer, Michael Ondaatje, has recently argued, in *The Englishman's Boy*, that the Armenian genocide suffered, he suggested, a kind of psychological death. The boy tends to bear this out. The resourcefulness of the boy, the progress into his world, the death ceases to have meaning. They watch each other's faces almost with indifference. That is to spiritualize the Turkish trials.

As for the Bedoukians, they are haunted faces and black eyes stare out at the reader. A photograph in the book, of Kerop in 1919, only by 1938, shows the same face, ghostly smile and all, and a historical note explains that Kerop was a victim of two million Armenian deaths, and a million displaced. The book's title, *The Urchin*, indicates a disconnection by the author (now a successful Montreal businessman) from the tattered emigrant boy he describes. And in general this boy is oddly unreal. His love for—and resentment of—his stu-

nd, and trying to find an outlet in writing. Americans neither paint nor write it, she said: "They could be at home."

The flight from democracy to the central core of Alice and Gertrude's lives. They lived in Paris as refugees from their threat. Alice, first, arrived in Paris in 1908, in revolt, not Parisian. She enjoyed reading French, but Gertrude did not, and the language of her salon was English.

Because she quotes the entire from American sources, Linda Simon's book actually emphasizes the transatlantic nature of Toklas and Stein. Toklas herself understood it as the posthumous publication of *Four in America*: "I'm going to write a book about the essence of United States," she feels, she might be the couple's chief interpreter with Americans. "They went to Paris to write," as Alice told a piece for the *New York Times Book Review* in 1939, in the First World War "they were in the Hamlet mood." Scott Fitzgerald and the other parables; and after the war, World War and the Bill of Rights and their novel on the way... and more serious young Americans who were writing about the world. Gertrude became the intellectual center and after her death the two continued to make the pilgrimage to Paris.

She stayed on alone, widowed for another twenty years. In increasingly reduced circumstances, Linda Simon calls a section of her book "The Alone the Dead": much of the diminishing though still energetic was spent keeping Gertrude's memory green, and so on, and so on, and so on. In her late seventies she wrote *The Alice B. Toklas Cookbook*, which she collected the rare recipes that Gertrude and friends had relished for years. "I was like those good one-book ladies Mary McLeod Bethune and Marie Bashkirtseff—except that I was the subject of my passion as well as she wrote afterwards." The book is a curiosity: weirdly structured, and carefully full of passion as it is of epigrams, and heavy cream. The language is unique; masterly, nonchalant, sometimes sharp, sometimes prim, perfect sounding. "With whatever instrument I will have chosen you will find me to incorporate drop by drop an excellent olive oil."

The voice can be heard more clearly in *Staying On Alone*, Alice's perspicacious, lively letters illuminating the millenium at other times to express the bottomless bitterness.

Beyond the black revolution

By Nicholas Deakin

THOMAS L. BLAIR:
Retreat to the Ghetto
The End of a Dream?
263pp. Wildwood House. £8.95.

Whatever happened to the black revolution? During the 1960s, the struggle of black Americans for freedom—variously defined—was the one subject that could be guaranteed to engage the attention of the younger blacks in the United States but across the world. But over the past decade the spotlight has increasingly fallen elsewhere: other groups monopolize the television screens with their grievances, and the shelves of bookstores no longer groan beneath the weight of new black manifestos. Is this decline in visibility merely the result of a swing in the pendulum of fashion, or does it reflect real progress towards the resolution of the deeply felt grievances that originally propelled the issue of the future status of black Americans to the centre of the American political stage?

Thomas L. Blair's invigorating new book goes a good way towards answering these questions. He begins by providing the indispensable minimum of history, showing how the twin themes of separation or integration have been present from the beginnings of articulate black protest, sometimes in direct opposition but often also in conjunction. The debate between the protagonists of these views stood out in high relief in the course of the 1960s, when their arguments were conducted in the full glare of publicity; but the substance of the discussion often covered familiar ground. However, the circumstances of the 1960s differed in three crucial respects from those of previous periods of black protest. First, demographic changes, and in particular the movement of blacks from the rural South to the urban North, had shifted the main location of events. Second, the progress of the countries of the Third World towards independence, and in particular the ending of colonial rule in many parts of Africa, provided a new point of reference for black

Americans. Third, the response that the black protest evoked from white America was different in scope and kind from that encountered previously.

Against this background, Professor Blair describes in some detail in *Retreat to the Ghetto* the brief parable of the civil rights movement from its early achievements in the South—which were gained at a heavy price—through the apogee of the March on Washington in 1963 when it seemed for a brief moment as if Martin Luther King's dream of freedom and justice might prove to be a reality, to the disillusionment of the younger blacks in the movement when promises were not kept, and the system failed to deliver immediate benefits. He traces the rise of the black urban guerrillas; first, the emergence of Malcolm X (who, as Professor Blair observes, "was a media man, not a clandestine insurgent or mullah"), and then the men with guns, the Black Panthers and finally the cultural nationalists, with whom the Panthers had a long and bloody feud. In all these later developments, the struggle for independence in the Third World had a significance that was more than merely symbolic. It might not have been literally the case, as the Panthers used to claim, that every brother on the block had read his Fanon; but the sense of new possibilities, and of forming part of a wider movement of the dispossessed reclaiming their rights by force, had a profound influence on the rhetoric of the movement—and since the movement was continually exposed to and largely dependent on the media, rhetoric was a key factor. Finally, as the 1960s wore on, most of the radical groups adopted for their public statements at least some tincture of Marxist-Leninism, however superficial.

This complex series of evolutions is charted with clarity by Professor Blair. But he is rather less thorough in his description of the response of successive administrations to black demands, and the consequences of that response. The "civil rights movement" was their main objective as an entrenching rights in legislation; and to a large degree that demand was conceded. Not all the hopes invested in changes in the law proved justified; but in some respects legislation enacted in the 1960s has produced striking changes—in

fact, for example, but even as the civil rights legislation was being passed it had become clear that it was a necessary but not a sufficient condition of racial justice. Hence President Johnson's war on poverty, and the vast sums allocated by his administration to the attempt to wipe out urban deprivation. It has become customary to write off these programmes as failures; and, in the sense that the urban ghettos and their appalling social and economic problems still exist largely unchanged, there is demonstrably merit in that view. But in a less spectacular sense the investment of government funds and energies has produced tangible change. Professor Blair's conclusion that there have been "extensive gains for the most favoured segments of black America—the middle class and the organized and better-off sections of the working class"—is unlikely to be challenged, on the evidence he presents. Finally, although the response of the authorities towards radical black groups has often been cruelly repressive, the funding of community action in the course of the war on poverty provided a unique opportunity for indigenous leaders in the black ghettos, which they were not slow to grasp.

Taken together, these developments have provided the basis for what has been in many ways the most striking change of all—the full involvement of blacks in the mainstream of American politics. This has involved not merely taking part (on occasion, the decisive part) in presidential elections, but also the rapid growth in the number of black elected officials at all levels from the Senate downwards. The prospect of black self-government in the increasing number of major cities with a black majority and the population has become increasingly realistic. It may be the case, as Professor Blair suggests, that control of the inner city is a hollow prize without the resources to improve conditions there; certainly the test of the effectiveness of the new black politics will be whether any real change can be brought about in conditions in the ghetto. But, on balance, it appears that in terms of achieving concrete gains in real power and restoring human dignity the battle may after all have proved more effective than the bullet. If the cost has been some surrender of prime-time television coverage that may prove to be a price worth paying.

Beyond the biological

By Anthony Storr

EDITH COBB:
The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood
130pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £7.75.

Edith Cobb was born in 1895 and died at the age of eighty-one. A found hurt in his mind, he is unable, further, to express himself, and so the years—resolved themselves into cardboard phrases. Another writer, Michael Ondaatje, has recently argued, in *The Englishman's Boy*, that the Armenian genocide suffered, he suggested, a kind of psychological death. The boy tends to bear this out. The resourcefulness of the boy, the progress into his world, the death ceases to have meaning. They watch each other's faces almost with indifference. That is to spiritualize the Turkish trials. As for the Bedoukians, they are haunted faces and black eyes stare out at the reader. A photograph in the book, of Kerop in 1919, only by 1938, shows the same face, ghostly smile and all, and a historical note explains that Kerop was a victim of two million Armenian deaths, and a million displaced. The book's title, *The Urchin*, indicates a disconnection by the author (now a successful Montreal businessman) from the tattered emigrant boy he describes. And in general this boy is oddly unreal. His love for—and resentment of—his stu-

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Imagination in Childhood is less than 100 pages long; about 40,000 words or so. Even so, since she had a stroke in 1971, her friends and family have put only a few words on paper. It is clear that, had she survived until her death with her faculties intact, we should still be waiting for the final version.

What was Edith Cobb attempting? Something, I believe, which would have appeared more original thirty years ago than it does today. Essentially interdisciplinary in her way of thinking she was deeply disturbed by what she called "an unexplained void between man and nature, between cultural history and natural history." "We find ourselves historically placed in and a part of the animal kingdom without any explanation, as to how we became human."

Her way of bridging this gap was to take another look at the psychological development of children, not only by studying the works of psychologists like Gesell and analysts like Erikson, but also by taking into account the subjective experiences of childhood recorded in autobiography and biography. She accumulated an extensive collection of these latter works that they constitute a special bequest to one of the libraries at Columbia.

Edith Cobb conceived that "unlike all other animal species, the human child displays a spontaneous striving to go beyond biological fulfillment and maturation and to add form and novelty to the environment. One knows what she means, but I doubt if this statement is correct if one considers the activities of bowerbirds or subhuman primates. However, she is surely right in trying to find a biological root in the creative which, when she is writing, must have been regarded as a spiritual activity entirely remote from instinct. And

In spite of her psychoanalysis, she recognizes that the Freudian concept of sublimation is not enough. Creative urges, however, are motivated not only by need for sublimation, but also by the developmental strivings of the total psychosomatic self."

She realizes the significance of neonatal, the prolongation of immaturity in man, in preserving what animals of other species tend to lose when they become adult. Creative urges, however, are motivated not only by need for sublimation, but also by the developmental strivings of the total psychosomatic self."

But recent work, particularly in the form of David Stern's *The Evolution of Intelligence* (1974), has rendered Edith Cobb's book unremarkable. Had it been published thirty or forty years ago, it might have won a different aspect. She will, I think, continue to be remembered, not by this book, but by her bequest to Columbia and by her many friends.

Philosophy in Social Work is a collection of original papers edited by Noel Timms and David Watson (209pp. Routledge, £5.95, paperback £2.95). The subjects discussed include discourse and ethics, the morality of law and the politics of probation, authority and the social worker, and social work and ideology. Most of the papers examine ways in which philosophy can revise discussion of beliefs and values in social work. The contributors also suggest that philosophers should "intensify their treatment of concrete issues of social significance."

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The language of thoughts

By Max Black

GOTTLOB FREGE:

Logical Investigations
Edited with a preface by P. T. Geach. Translated by P. T. Geach and R. H. Stoothoff.
86pp. Oxford: Blackwell, £3.95.

The three articles here translated were originally intended to be chapters of a book, which Frege did not live to complete. The first essay, "Thoughts" (published in 1918), deals with the subject-matter of logic conceived as the science of the "laws of truth", sharply distinguished from the empirical psychology of such mental processes as believing, asserting or inferring. Frege calls whatever is primarily true or false a "thought" (in modern parlance, approximately the same as "proposition"). Thoughts are timeless and eternal; they cannot be created but only grasped. The second essay, "Negation" (1918), which usefully supplements the first, is largely concerned with deciding whether negating a thought "dissolves" it into disconnected parts. Frege argues that the negation of a thought is an integral thought. The last essay, "Compound Thoughts" (1923, translated by R. H. Stoothoff), is little more than a preliminary analysis of composite propositions that involve "or" and "and", and it is then that Frege may have intended it as an introduction to the propositional calculus. (A more representative selection of Frege's best writings is P. T. Geach and Max Black's *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, second edition, 1960.)

Frege was partly responsible for the prolonged neglect of what Wittgenstein called his splendid (*grossartige*) work. He got off to an unfortunate start, for although his first book, a slim pamphlet of Frege's (1879), has been called "the most important single work ever written in logic" (van Heijenoort), it was contemptuously dismissed by logicians as eminent as Venn and Schröder.

They must have been put off by its uninviting title, *Begriffsschrift, eine der arithmetisch nachgebildete Formelsprache des reinen Denkens* (Conceptual notation, a

formula language modelled on that of arithmetic), and were certainly repelled by Frege's ingenious but rebarbative two-dimensional symbolism. Schröder called the new notation "a monstrous waste of space" and child Frege for adopting "the Japanese custom of writing vertically". Even Russell, who was given the tract by James Ward some twenty years after its publication, said "I possessed the book for years before I could make out what it meant."

A disconcerting episode. Frege may have been over-fond of his two-dimensional displays of logical form (which he continued to use in his masterpiece, *Grundgesetze der Arithmetik*, 1893 and 1903)—horizontal bars, connected by vertical crosses, to produce diagrams looking rather like esplanaded tree-branches. But any competent mathematician could have mastered in short order this sensible way of exploiting the length as well as the breadth of a printed page; and a first-rate philosophical logician like Russell might have perceived Frege's originality in introducing a generalized notion of a mathematical function into logic and inventing quantification theory.

Frege suffered from being fifty years ahead of his contemporaries in logical sophistication. Still, such lasting achievements as his distinction between sense (*Sinn*) and reference (*Bedeutung*), his great polemic against the contamination of logic by psychology ("psychologism"), and his slashing attacks on the formalist view of mathematics as a meaningless game played with symbols, were expressed in vigorous prose, accessible to anybody who might be symbol-shy.

Lay readers may be surprised to learn of Frege's influence on Wittgenstein's style. In his brief preface, P. T. Geach says: "Of his great debt to Frege Wittgenstein remained conscious to the end of his life. A few days before his death he said to me 'How I wish I could have written like Frege!'" (But he could and did.) Geach appends the passage (Zettel, 712) where Wittgenstein says: "The style of my sentences is extraordinarily strongly influenced by Frege. And if I wanted to I could establish this influence where at first sight no one would suspect it. But Wittgenstein never used Frege's notation and did not share Frege's

interest in deriving arithmetic from logic by completely formal proofs.

"The distinctive felicities and limitations of Frege's style possibly result from a tension between his ideal of rigorous reasoning and his inapplicability to philosophical discussion in ordinary German. Pace George Steiner, who was recently represented by *The New York Times* (December 5, 1977), as calling both Frege and Wittgenstein "linguistic philosophers," Frege attaches no philosophical importance to the grammar of ordinary language, to whose imperfections he repeatedly adverted. In the last of the essays here collected, he speaks of "the greatest difficulty for philosophy" arising from the fact that "the work, namely ordinary language, is little suited to the purpose, for its formation was governed by requirements wholly different from those of philosophy." Yet in his informal writings Frege masterfully exploits some of the features of ordinary language that would hinder a "science" of philosophy—its allusiveness, suggestiveness and, above all, its concreteness. In his hands, ordinary language, extraordinarily used, serves better cause than the pursuit of a mythical philosophical science—as an instrument of provocative and illuminating dialogue.

Frege is most effective when he is happily demolishing some influential but irresponsible view on the foundations of mathematics. For example, in his highly readable book, *Die Grundlagen der Arithmetik* (1884)—which deserves a less warty translation than the late J. L. Austin provided in *Foundations of Arithmetic* (revised edition, 1938)—he pokes fun at Mill's definition of 3 as 2 + 1 rests upon the fact that triplex of pebbles or other physical objects can be rearranged as a pair of things physically separated from the third. Frege says:

Wie gut, doch, dass nicht Alles in der Welt nicht und ungeteilt ist! Denn könnten wir diese Trennung nicht vornehmen, und 2+1 wäre nicht 3! Wie schade, dass Mill nicht auch die physikalischen Tatsachen abgelehnt hat, wie den Zahlen 0 und 1 zu Grunde liegen. (How fortunate that in the world are riveted and

nailed down; for then we would be unable to separate them and 2+1 would not be 3! What a pity that Mill did not also describe the physical facts that underlie the numbers 0 and 1!) (My translation.)

That passage is a good specimen of the heightened conversational style, so rare in German philosophical writing (with Schopenhauer as a possible exception), of which Frege was a virtuoso.

Sometimes Frege's ridicule of pretensions and half-digested philosophical dogmas produces fantasies that Alice might have enjoyed. In his important review of Husserl's *Philosophie der Arithmetik* he attacks the alleged efficacy, in a process of abstraction, of "diversion of attention" (*Ablenkung der Aufmerksamkeit*), a power that he implicitly links with pre-frontal absence of mind (*die Zerstreuung der Gedanken*). Frege imagines us looking at a black and a white cat sitting side by side, and progressively applying the "logical force" of withdrawn attention. In this way, he says, we strip each cat first of its colour, then of its posture, position and everything else, until nothing remains but a bloodless phantom (*Gespens*) still numerically distinct from its erstwhile neighbours. (Those unsavoury cats, looking even a grin, keep amicable company in my philosophical zoo with Wittgenstein's lion and Forster's cow.)

Here and elsewhere, Frege shows robust pertinacity in reducing a view to absurdity by taking its expression quite literally. But his sharp and terse manner, so effective in dislodging antecedent prejudice, and so enjoyable in any sufferer from the swagback periodic sentences of other German philosophers, is not always suited for the expression of his own subtle and sometimes paradoxical positions. Even the most appreciative reader is sometimes left wishing for more help than Frege provides.

For example, in the first of the essays under review, Frege argues against the view that truth is definable in the following words: "Denn in jeder Definition gibt man gewisse Merkmale an. Und bei der Anwendung auf einen bestimmten Fall könnte es dann immer darauf an, ob es wahr wäre, dass diese Merkmale zuträfen. So drückt man sich im Kreis. Hier-

nach ist es wahrscheinlich, dass der Inhalt des Wortes 'wahr' einseitig und unklar ist." (For in a definition certain criteria would be given. And in application to a particular case, it would always be a question whether it were true or not. So we should be going round in a circle. It is likely, therefore, that the content of the word 'true' is one-sided and indefinable.)

This is too swift to be persuasive. One wonders what Frege means by the question of truth arising again in any specific application of the word "truth". Many philosophers have thought that an utterance and a confirming utterance and a confirming utterance—does correspond to the respects to the condition of heavens? No doubt Frege would have an answer, to which I have no objection, but it is necessarily laziness that induces that he might have supplied

Geach's translations are available as one has come to the meticulously close to the phrasing and yet, nearly time, sounding like the an English writer. Bewilderingly find him Frege's "Mühe" a "pain" (9), which my dictionary Australian slang "why me" or "huck"? Stoothoff's use of the third essay means high standards. Only one needs notice: on page 2, paragraph, last line, he reads "do we".

The information that translations already exist has been placed in the rather than on the jacket dates supplied: the standard made that Geach's translation since it appeared in Black's *Geach*. The bibliography should have reference to the complete Frege bibliography provided by Ward Bynum's fine and translation of the *Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege* (Oxford, 1974).

MILITARY HISTORY



Footsolders of the Twenty-fourth Regiment at the battle of Isandlwana, 1879, when almost the entire regiment was wiped out by the Zulu army. From *Uniforms and Weapons of the Zulu War* by Christopher Wilkinson-Latham (96pp. Dabford, £4.95).

The creator of armies

By Philip Warner

GEORGE H. CASSAR:
Architect of Victory
Edinburgh: William Kimber, £9.95.

When Kitchener visited the Dardanelles in 1915, Professor Cassar writes, he took with him the sense of office as Secretary of State for War, believing that would prevent a new appointment being made in his absence. (Interestingly, James I. threw the Great Seal into the Thames when fleeing to France, believing that this would stop the Government of Britain functioning.)

Professor Cassar sometimes appears omniscient. What makes him think that Arab's armies were asleep at Tel-el-Kebir? The battle took place at daybreak. Can he ever have seen the battlefield at Loos which he describes as a "number of hills interspersed with villages, mine-heads and slag-heaps" (attributing the observation to Haig)? Haig could not have said this because he had personally inspected the area and had listened to Rawlinson, the 1st Corps commander, saying bitterly: "My new front at Loos is as flat as the palm of my hand." Loos was in fact suicidal not because of these features, but because of gas attacks, which German wrote and adverse winds which blew back the Allies' gas. Since he supported Joffre against Sir John French at Loos, Kitchener must bear some responsibility. But Professor Cassar glosses over this and the disaster at Handul in 1888, many would think Kitchener lucky not to have been court-martialled—the battle certainly showed up his limitations as a field commander. The author's description of the charge of the 21st Lancers at Omdurman is also questionable. Ventures into criticism or commendation of field commanders (especially of French and Haig) require more knowledge of military matters than Professor Cassar appears to possess.

The most useful, though not the most gripping, part of the book describes Kitchener's battles and achievements in the War Office. The brushes with Lloyd George are fully detailed and there is no doubt about which side Professor Cassar is on. Here, in particular, fuller dating would clarify the

teous to women and more at ease with them than wild men. She herself found him a delightful companion. There are a number of people still living who knew Kitchener quite well.

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The enigma of Khartoum

By Jan Morris

CHARLES CHENEVIX TRENCH:
Charles Gordon
An Eminent Victorian Renaissance
320pp. Allen Lane, £8.95.

Of all the British Empire's peculiar champions, General Gordon most exactly fulfilled the predictions of the great public. He was brave, he was holy, he adventured in distant parts exotically dressed, he had marvellous eyes and he died a martyr. (His only rival, half a century later, was T. E. Lawrence, but he betrayed the imperial idiom by dying in a motor-bike crash instead of being speared by heathen fanatics.) As legend, Gordon was flawless. He was a hero of heroes, Gladstone said: "not a man but a God," reported an often quoted if always anonymous Sudanese.

Today, if we hardly know better, at least we think differently, and while Charles Gordon has lost hardly a lot of his celebrity, his allure has shifted rather. The archetype of the Victorian martyr's cause seems dubious now, and even the simple Christian faith looks less simple than it did. Charles Chenevix Trench's fine new biography is described as a reassessment, but it is only the latest in a long series of afterthoughts and new judgments, from Lytton Strachey on.

Of course it was only the public at large who saw Gordon, in his lifetime, as the immaculate knight errant. People in high places knew him better. Gladstone was infuriated by him, Cromer called him

half-mad, and Strachey was not the first to comment on his drinking habits. If ordinary people thought him an infallible authority on everything Sudanese, those closer to the hero knew that he did not even speak Arabic. If parlor marshals called him a great general, the War Office knew that his only war service, before the Sudan, had been as an engineer subaltern in the Crimea and a commander of irregulars in China. Gordon was a rotten judge of character, despite those thrilling eyes, and if he was really an expert on anything, it was on military surveying and fundamentalist interpretations of the Bible.

All this Mr Chenevix Trench skilfully and sympathetically makes clear, but like all biographers of Gordon before him, like biographers of T. E. Lawrence too, he soon comes up against a phenomenon: the unaccountable ability of some men to exert their fascination on others. Gordon's powers of inspiration were astonishing. Again and again in this book we meet men (though never women) who willingly re-route their entire lives in order to be with Gordon, and to endure appalling dangers and discomforts simply to serve under his command.

There is no debunking this extraordinary power. It was a fact, and no potent fact that Gordon, like Lawrence, was able to influence the course of world history simply by exerting it. It was more than simply heroic magnetism: there was affection in it too, and empathy, and even perhaps amusement. Nor was it just a homosexual attraction, but until communications were cut, Gordon really did make a start, as instructed, with the evacuation of the Khartoum garrison—more than 2,000 Egyptians were sent away. Third, he was powerfully persuaded us that Gordon could not honourably desert those thousands of Sudanese who, at his own appeal, had risked all to fight against the Mahdi, and who would certainly be slaughtered (as indeed they were) if Khartoum fell.

Many bewilderments remain, naturally. Mr Chenevix Trench finds no explanation, not even a death-wish, for Gordon's baffling disposal of his vital code-book; and he is indeterminate about a theory of favour himself—that Wolsey, a born conspirator and a lifelong friend of Gordon, engineered Khartoum as a means of extending the imperial frontiers up the Nile.

Still, the book trenchantly demonstrates how the enigma of Gordon's natural ascendancy developed into the magnificent puzzle of his last action—capped as it was, in the theatrical way the Victorians loved, by his apotheosis on the palace steps. Charles Gordon tells the old tale excellently. If his reassessments are nothing startling in themselves, and his new discoveries of only peripheral interest, it is nevertheless a thoroughly contemporary, post-imperial portrait of a figure whose fascination varies in kind so curiously down the generations, but whose bright blue eyes disconcertingly never waver.

Then again, Gordon inspired confidence because he seemed to know. People instinctively felt that he must know, because he looked so sure-like and behaved prophetically, and often enough, as Mr Chenevix Trench demonstrates, he really did. In the detail he was often absurdly

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Literary Supplement

The language of the plain man

By J. O. Urmson

KRITH GRANTHAM:

J. L. Austin
A Critique of Ordinary Language
Philosophy
281pp. Hassocks: Harvester Press,
£5.50.

In this book the main line of argument is that J. L. Austin's work on the theory of language and communication, mainly contained in *How to Do Things with Words*, is of value though not free from error, while his writings based on an examination of ordinary language and concerned to characterize the distinctions we may make with its aid are on the whole misconceived and have been an evil influence on philosophy. While the

book is a masterpiece of clarity and insight, it is basically misunderstood. Austin's number of points, to some of the most fundamental of which this review will draw attention. One basic misconception is about what Austin and his associates meant by ordinary language. Thus Keith Grantham writes: "The central concern is with ordinary language, the language spoken prior to specialists (including philosophers) theorizing the language of the plain man, who makes many appearances in his work. Grantham apparently also thinks that Austin objected to the use of any but ordinary language, since he says: 'Although Austin deprecated the idea of constructing new language from the scratch, it seems that he had no objection to that. For the practice of his own philosophy, he always meant to produce language simply not philosophical language; thus he in-

published notes for a lecture, characteristically, in a handwritten thing about one way of possibly doing one part of philosophy," he wrote: "Seen very odd accounts of 'ordinary': but—anything not philosophical." Specialists language outside philosophy is ordinary language for philosophical purposes. Further, Austin never deprecated the construction of new idioms; as he says in these notes: "new concepts needed when new facts noticed and new non-practical inferences drawn." What Austin in fact continually said was that his way of doing one part of philosophy one studied ordinary language; not the language of philosophers; that is something quite different.

What may have misled Grantham is the fact that Austin in his published work did study the language of "the plain man", not that of mathematicians, physicists and engineers. Why this was so, first, he reasons, was that his audience was not philosophers, and vocabulary deeply embedded in everyday language were more likely to be of interest to study than more peripheral areas of language; second, he thought that well-developed technical terms were already clearly defined, so that the need for the kind of study he did was less great; third, he recognized that he simply was not competent to study the more technical areas—to quote again from these unpublished notes: "Remember, all brought up as classics; no quarrel with maths etc, just ignorant."

Another view that Grantham espouses is that Austin believed that "ordinary language" had some "peculiar rightness", that it was a view of the true nature of reality, as the reduction of all other conceptualizations. But Grantham asks, having admitted, Austin with this fantastic doctrine, what is Austin to do? Two natural

languages draw different distinctions? "The vulgar is not a vulgar as he does leave him helpless when it comes to adjudicating between languages, as we must when they conflict."

What one has to be on one's guard against, however, is the repeated tendency to suppose that an insight into a particular form of language is really an insight into the nature of things, how the world is or how people are. But this is all out of focus, distorted. It is true that Austin thought that a study of distinctions made in language was also a study of reality; but he thought that any coherent language provided the possible way of drawing distinctions in reality. The notion of adjudicating between the English use of "know" and the French use of "savoir" and "connaître", as Grantham suggests, would have seemed to Austin absurd, and the insight into a particular form of language is an insight into one way in which one may understand the world and people, a far different claim from that suggested by Grantham. Austin thought that the distinctions contained in any natural language were more likely to be interesting than any we might make up, but being interesting does not constitute a claim to sole legitimacy, and Austin never thought that it did.

In addition to his other grounds for attacking Austin's attention to ordinary language, Grantham also thinks that his examining such distinctions as that between precisely and exactly "may prompt the suspicion that in his work Austin is worrying away at a microscopic level which cannot possibly hold any philosophical significance". In defending these distinctions against proposed reformulations, Austin exhibits his "injudicious conservatism". But one of Austin's

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Quarrelling with Carrillo

By Paul Preston

JORGE SEMPRUN:
Autobiografía de Federico Sánchez
345pp. Barcelona: Planeta.
400 ptas.

FERNANDO CLAUDIN:
Documentos de una divergencia
comunista
325pp. Barcelona: Iniciativas
Editoriales. 325 ptas.

There exists today no more outspoken champion of the positions collectively known as "Eurocommunism" than Santiago Carrillo, the secretary general of the Partido Comunista de España. In a variety of articles, and particularly in two books, *Dialogue On Spain and Eurocommunism* and *The State*, Carrillo has set out his claims to have forged a party independent of Moscow, committed to the peaceful electoral road to a democratic socialism and with its own flourishing brand of internal debate.

Recent savage attacks on Carrillo by senior Russian ideologues bear witness to the distance that the PCE has travelled away from its Stalinist past. Yet, until the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, there was not a more faithful interpreter of the Kremlin's wishes in the communist world than the PCE. In the 1940s the Spanish communists, unlike their French and Italian comrades, interrogated and punished their cadres who had been in German concentration camps. During the Soviet assault on Tito, the Spaniards sought official victims in their own ranks, purging them for the crime of excessive nationalism. Only a year before the PCE protested against the Czech invasion, it had undertaken a virulent campaign against Mao Tse-tung in line with anti-Chinese vituperation emanating from Moscow.

The relative suddenness of the PCE's bid for independence and its rapid conversion to positions hitherto chiefly associated with the Italian party have been the basis of accusations of tactical deception. Given that the Spanish party has long been committed to a policy of broad alliances, known variously as "national reconciliation" and "the pact for liberty", it had little choice over Czechoslovakia. Carrillo could hardly claim to his would-be bourgeois allies in the struggle against Franco that he was a democratic socialist and at the same time condone anti-democratic activities by other communists elsewhere. Since most of these accusations came from propagandists of the Franco regime, they did not damage the party's credibility overmuch. However, with the dictatorship well on the way to being dismantled, and the party doing less well than expected in the electoral stakes, the issue of credibility has assumed considerable importance.

Just at the moment when his "Eurocommunist" pronouncements were beginning to do wonders for Carrillo's image in the bourgeois press of Spain and Europe, the PCE secretary general received what could only seem like a stab in the back. The seeming treachery in question was the publication at the end of 1977 of Jorge Semprun's memoirs, revealing his role in the 1950s and early 1960s as a member of the PCE's clandestine network inside Spain. Semprun was expelled from the party in April 1965 along with the PCE's major theorist, Fernando Claudin. Their crime was to have postulated the notions now associated with Santiago Carrillo.

They questioned the socialist validity of the Soviet system; they called for the PCE to adjust its policy to the strength of capitalism in Spain and they protested about Carrillo's authoritarian handling of the party. All these issues were raised in *Autobiografía de Federico Sánchez*—the name was Semprun's pseudonym in clandestinity. By this spring the book had sold 150,000 copies and had been the centre of a massive press campaign.

The party's reaction to Semprun's book showed a somewhat bewildered determination not to let past issues tarnish the newly won image. Undeterred Semprun's remarkably graphic story is the assertion that

the PCE's adoption of "Eurocommunist" positions is rendered valuable by the continuing existence within the party of basically Stalinist attitudes. The claim that the party had falsified its own history in creating a democratic image was a common one in the mouths of Francists, but Semprun was rather different. As the author of novels such as *La gran vengada* and *La deuxième mort de Ramón Mercader* and of the scripts for films such as *Z, L'aveu*, and *Un été de guerre* est finie for Alain Resnais, Semprun was something of a world-famous figure. More importantly, he was a party hero. From the age of seventeen until his capture in 1943, aged twenty, by the Gestapo, Semprun fought in the French Resistance. In Buchenwald, his linguistic abilities not only helped him to survive but also allowed him to organize the communist network within the camp. As Federico Sánchez, he carried out clandestine work in Spain with courage and intelligence, eventually being co-opted into the PCE's politburo. In short, Semprun's accusations could not be ignored, although to date Carrillo claims not to have had time to read the book.

An early critic of the *Autobiografía*, writing in the PCE weekly *Mundo Obrero*, suggested that if the party was really on the road to inter-party democracy then it must come to terms with its past mistakes. This provoked a rebuke from one of the few communist parliamentary deputies, Fernando Soto, who denounced the book as "a load of rubbish dumped on the highest peaks of human dignity". In refutation of Semprun's allegations of a personality cult around Carrillo, Gregorio López Raimundo, president of the Catalan party, remarked that "the business about Semprun and Claudin is just bad-tempered jealousy of the political, ideological, moral and intellectual superiority of Carrillo. They should be humble and accept reality".

After thirty-seven years of persecution in the struggle against the dictatorship—the PCE was not legalized until April 9, 1977—it is perhaps understandable that Semprun's book should be seen by the party leadership as a blow below the belt. Nevertheless, complaints that Semprun's view is a partial one would be better met with documents rather than insult. After all, until the party can be believed about its past, it cannot be expected to be believed about its commitment to a democratic future.

As it stands, and even if it does not provoke a reopening of party archives, *Autobiografía de Federico Sánchez* is a remarkable document and a major contribution to the history of the world communist movement in the throes of de-Stalinization. It is a book which is no less gripping as a classy spy thriller on account of its vivid reconstruction of the world of clandestine agents operating against a repressive dictatorship. The book will not, however, be to everyone's taste. The published descriptions of a novel, a denomination Semprun claims privately to have had nothing to do with. Its complex flashback technique is more reminiscent of the work of James Joyce than of a conventional, chronological political memoir. It is a technique which allows certain crucial issues—like Semprun's own slowness in awakening to the PCE's Stalinist features—to receive less attention than might otherwise be expected. It also allows for some off-the-cuff accusations—one party leader is described as "tonto del culo" (stupid down to his arse), another is said to be guardian of the PCE's "secrets of blood and shit"—to be made without substantiation.

For all that, it is an extraordinarily important book, a case study of the break-up of the communist movement. Hitherto, the details of how Semprun and Claudin came to see that the inflexible PCE was in reality a party of "bunch with the realities of Francoism" and of the Stalinist methods used by Carrillo to remove them were known to few people, even in the party. Semprun's experience in the in-

terior was clearly crucial, but Claudin's disenchantment with Carrillo's line went back even further. After Khrushchev's revelations of Stalinist crime to the twentieth congress of the CPSU in February 1956, Claudin felt that the time had come for a thorough rethink about the PCE's past and present. Carrillo, on the other hand, was content to leave things to Khrushchev. Claudin's doubts were exacerbated by the events of autumn 1956 in Hungary. They began to coincide with those of Semprun in the late 1950s as a consequence of the failure of the party's call for a national general strike to topple Franco. The PCE line was that Spain was a backward agrarian country exploited by a narrow Francoist clique which could easily be overthrown by mass action. Claudin was disturbed by the fact that the party ignored overwhelming evidence of the high level of capitalist development which, if anything, suggested a rosy future for the dictatorship.

Claudin's detailed and penetrating analysis of capitalism under Franco was rejected by the party executive in March 1964 as right-wing deviationism. Claudin was dismissed from the party and subjected to a bitter campaign within party circles and their views were silenced. In an attempt to open a debate on the issues at stake, Claudin wrote a lengthy account of the differences in the party leadership called *Las Divergencias en el Partido*. Privately printed and distributed clandestinely among a small number of militants, this immensely rare book was, prior to Semprun's memoirs, the only available source for what is arguably the most important issue in Spanish communist history since the Civil War. Its republication, along with the March 1964 report and the party's counter-accusations of fractionalism, is to be welcomed in the struggle against less flamboyantly readable than the *Autobiografía*, these documents are a perfect complement to it. Moreover, the accuracy of Claudin's prophecies are only emphasized by his stature as a political analyst and thereby underlining the seriousness of his loss to the PCE—but also makes the documents remarkably useful for an understanding of the socio-economic background to Spanish politics today.

There is, of course, the possibility of another side to the story of the Claudin/Semprun schism. If they were finally expelled, the PCE president, La Pasionaria, called them "bird-brains" (*chubascos de chorlito*) and it seems to have been more in sorrow than in anger. In this sense, López Raimundo claimed that he and Carrillo were fully aware of the changing economic situation in Spain but simply could not inform the rank and file that, after twenty years of fighting Francoism, the regime was likely to last another twenty years. If that is true, it could then be argued that Carrillo acted to stop the party splitting in order to introduce the new line at a more propitious moment. However, that would not justify the way in which two of the party's most valuable leaders were expelled and vilified. Moreover, the onus of proof now lies with the party. If the challenge is taken up, those two books may yet turn out to be even more important than they now seem.

Marjorie Grace Hutchinson's *Early Economic Thought in Spain 1177-1740* (189pp. Allen and Unwin, £10) is divided into two parts, "The Middle Ages" and "The Age of Mercantilism". In the first she discusses in some detail, the topic of usury—among the Jews, in Islam, and in Christian teaching as well as specifically in Spain. She goes on to consider Greek Economics in Spain with references to Plato, Aristotle, Arab heirs of Greece and Averroes. It is in the second part that Mrs. Grace-Hutchinson returns to a subject on which she has already written, although it has been twenty-six years since her study of Spanish monetary theory in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, *The School of Salamanca*, first appeared. This was a time of serious inflation and Mrs. Grace-Hutchinson gives a historical perspective of the theories of the modern monetarists and of the anti-monetarists who have recently become increasingly interested in this period of Spanish history.

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In love with order

By Melveena McKendrick

JAMES E. MARANISS:
On Calderón
120pp. University of Missouri Press
(AUCP), £9.10.

It had to come, of course, the revolt against the "new orthodoxy" of Calderonian criticism, for the desire to break new ground is quite properly the ambition of every academic. The so-called "British school" has in large measure accomplished its aim of encouraging flickers of the new and to a certain canon which can rival its contribution to Spanish studies in imagination and intellectual rigour.

Of late, however, the restlessness has been growing: a critical assessment here, an article there, a book review that develops into a side-sway swipe at the British *calderonian*; and here at last is a sustained and overt attack. Like Jack the Giant-Killer James E. Maraniss, cheerfully sets out to slay the giant—Calderón.

Dr Maraniss's boldness extends even further than an attempted reassessment of Calderón, for he is drawn by Parker's championship of the dramatist into the old game of placing Lope de Vega and Calderón on the scales of greatness to see which soars the higher—a pastime on which there will never be agreement, although there is much in Dr Maraniss's view that Calderón's success for modern critics lies in the resonances between his vision of the world and our own existential problems. Dr Maraniss clearly considers Lope to be the greater dramatist.

However, far from offering new insights, he supports a perfectly legitimate view, his analysis has a familiar ring: Lope stands for unity, lyricism, the joys of nature, instinct and love, Calderón for duality, ratiocination, civilization, reason and duty. Quaintest of all, anti-erotic and pro-order, he "reduces the pursuit of pleasure, through theatrical distortion, so that it appears meaningless" and "portrays a world lacking in human trust and love".

We are not told exactly how Lope's drama stands for renewal and restoration or why the lyrical unification and reconciliation that characterize his plays are so satisfying. And this is the book's central weakness: it asserts without expounding. Dr Maraniss even subscribes to the fallacy that Lope's drama is where we must look to learn about Spanish life during the seventeenth century, going on to claim that Calderón's artificiality is not merely conceptual and structural but fundamental, in that while Lope bases his drama on life, Calderón's raw material is the *comedia* itself. Sadly the implications of this fascinating theory remain unexplored. As for the "new approach" to Calderón proclaimed on the dustjacket, it is by the author's own admission not new at all but the continuation of "a tradition begun by certain men of letters of the nineteenth century." I would be happier about this if I could be sure where it is Dr Maraniss wants to lead us. The book consists of an introduction full of provocative but undeveloped assertions, a somewhat unpunctuated chapter on the author, brief treatments of six representative plays, five and half pages on language, and a final, very partial look at Calderón's critics. It is often difficult to detect any consistency of approach or any coherent view, but consistency and coherence are Calderonian values and to seek consistency in criticism is perhaps as illegitimate as Dr Maraniss sees it to be in art and life.

His approach is, appropriately, rather the unsystematic one he identifies with Lope, compounded of kaleidoscopic judgments and elegant effusions. These fall into two categories because the arguments are compressed and the language is often opaque, but mainly because the basic premises are never convincingly established. Why must the

assumptions of the human code and the audience necessarily be Calderón's as well? By what measure is Lope's exaltation of romantic love more real than Calderón's preoccupation with the havoc love and sexuality create? Why is the instinctual more positive and more stable than the rational? What is "nature's truth" and what does "impersonally beautiful sexual aggression" mean? And are life's problems really susceptible of Lope's one, overriding and all-powerful solution, love?

Predictably it is with his treatment of honour that Calderón most offends Dr Maraniss. But can we really believe that there is no difference between Pedro Crespo's honour and Don Menéndez's, that the concept of honour itself is a construct so monolithic that it renders modifications and distinctions inconceivable?

Above all, have we not the right to expect Dr Maraniss to make his comparative position clear? Does Lope's theatre serve a set of national values (page 83) or is it (page 13) to be honour "an ambiguous value" for Calderón, "affirmed as a last resort" or is it the case that "he never departs from the honour values"? And why does Dr Maraniss insist that Calderón must be seen as a dramatist rather than a thinker, yet spend so much time belittling his ideas?

The book's general burden is that Calderón's dramatic stature is circumscribed by the Catholic world

picture from within which he wrote and by the artificial, arbitrary values of order, reason and control which were his answer to the tensions and chaos of man's existence. But what Dr Maraniss really seems to have against Calderón is that he is not a dramatist of lyrical effusion; that he does not, in short, feel, think or write like Lope.

And the only palpable novelty of his book is its all-pervasive tone of dismissiveness and condescension: he speaks of "easy theology" and "arch mummery", and holds that "Calderón's vision is dualistic, and his reigning obsession is to keep control, but his control is no deeper than his ability to get his grammar straight".

An inordinate amount of stimulation, therefore, but little nourishment. To embark on Dr Maraniss's book is to embark upon a journey into the past, to witness a new orthodoxy edifying itself. There is nothing in the bibliography after 1972 and nothing from a British pen after 1971; if Dr Maraniss reads Calderón during recent years he sees that it is necessary to go back in order to go forward. My strongest reaction to the book is one of sadness for the author who has spent so much time with a dramatist whom for all the scattering of words like "talent" and "grandeur", he obviously finds so thoroughly uncongenial.

As his title indicates, this book resolutely ties the *Cárdico* and its commentary to mystic theology. The opening chapter sets the saint's writings within the Western mystical tradition and argues that his mysticism is orthodox in stopping (just) short of monistic fusion of the soul with God. The concluding chapter sets his mysticism against twentieth-century Protestant theology as represented by Barth and Tillich. The chief concern of this original enterprise is to reconcile St John's mystical revelation with the "objective historical revelation" of the Church: but some readers may wonder how useful it is to learn, for example, that "San Juan's view of negation is out of line with contemporary (twentieth-century) views of the problem".

Thorough and scholarly as this book is within its self-imposed bounds, these prevent one's looking beyond the saint's writings and their literary and doctrinal sources. St John the man is dismissed on the first page in a single curt reference to the biographies by Crisóstomo de Jesús and Gerald Brenan. Thereby the possibility is excluded of even considering that the *Cárdico*, with its anguished search for escape from excommunicate solitude, might have anything to do with its author's own life.

More, and surely the most important fact there is about the poem—that the *Cárdico* was three quarters composed in the course of seven months' solitary confinement. Moreover, as R. O. Jones remarks of another of St John's poems, "The sexual union is allegorical, but unless we respond to the sexually the poem must fail of its full effect." The fact that in the *Cárdico* the poet speaks in the first person as a Bride searching for and uniting with a Bridegroom cannot be explained away by the influence of the Song of Songs. It must at least be acknowledged that the Carmelites had human feelings: Brenan writes of St Teresa's first meeting with another of her collaborators, "There can be no other word for it—she fell in love with him." To envelop the *Cárdico* in its commentary is to suppress the explosive force of an erotic symbolism derived almost entirely from the most sensual book in the Bible, a force hardly to be achieved again in Spanish before Lope.

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مَكْنَزُ الْأَصْلِ

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

THE BELFAST EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD

Applications are invited for the undernoted posts in the Libraries Department

(1) DIVISIONAL LIBRARIAN (2 Posts)

SALARY £3,825 to £4,545 plus supplements (AP5/801)

The successful applicants will work as part of a team of three responsible to the Assistant Chief Librarian (Lending Services), for development and day-to-day organisation of a lending system of twenty branch libraries.

(2) SECONDARY SCHOOLS LIBRARIAN

SALARY £3,825 to £4,545 plus supplements (AP5/801)

The successful applicant must have the ability and initiative to undertake the organisation and development of this new service to secondary schools, to train staff, supervise book selection and develop close liaison with the schools served. He/she should be critically aware of new developments in School Librarianship and have an interest in current educational trends.

(3) PRIMARY SCHOOLS LIBRARIAN

SALARY £3,825 to £4,545 plus supplements (AP5/801)

The successful applicant must be capable of organising the provision of library books, materials and services to all primary schools in the area. He/she should be critically aware of new developments in School Librarianship and have an interest in current educational trends.

(4) LOCAL HISTORY LIBRARIAN

SALARY £3,825 to £4,545 plus supplements (AP5/801)

The successful applicant will be responsible for the selection, documentation and exploitation of the stock of a major reference department. He/she should have a good knowledge of Irish history and literature.

(5) FURTHER EDUCATION LIBRARIAN

SALARY £3,825 to £4,545 plus supplements (AP5/801)

The successful applicant will supervise the library service provided in three colleges of further education and a School of Music and will be responsible for liaison between the public library and all aspects of continuing education within the community.

(6) MUSIC LIBRARIAN

SALARY £3,825 to £4,545 plus supplements (AP5/801)

The successful applicant will be responsible for the selection, documentation and exploitation of the stock of the music and gramophone record services. He/she should have a broad musical knowledge.

(7) ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN/BRANCH LIBRARIAN

SALARY £2,922 to £3,702 plus supplements (AP3/4)

Posts are available within the Library Service. The duties will entail either controlling and extending the operation of a service point or supporting a Department Librarian.

(8) ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN—HUMANITIES REFERENCE LIBRARY

SALARY £3,366 to £4,085 plus supplements (AP4/5)

To act as deputy in the largest reference department specialising in generalia, Social Sciences and History.

(9) ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

SALARY £2,922 to £3,702 plus supplements (AP3)

Posts are available throughout the library service. All posts are open to both male and female applicants who must be qualified librarians.

Pay Supplement: £312 per annum (Phase 1) plus 5 per cent on gross earnings (Phase 11).

CANVASSING WILL DISQUALIFY.

Application forms may be obtained from the Personnel Officer, Board Headquarters, 40 Academy Street, Belfast BT1 2NQ (Telephone 0232 29211, ext. 254/275).

Completed applications must be returned to the Personnel Officer not later than 4 p.m. Friday, June 23, 1978.

Closing date 7 July 1978.

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY OF NORTH QUEENSLAND

SENIOR LIBRARIAN

(GR. 1/GR. 2)

(TECHNICAL SERVICES LIBRARIAN)

Applications are invited for the above-mentioned position in the Library. The appointee will be responsible for the control and direction of staff in the Technical Services Division. With the Reader Services Librarian, the appointee will also be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the library.

For further details, contact the Personnel Officer, James Cook University, 1 St. George's Avenue, St. George's, Queensland 4801, Australia.

Closing date 7 July 1978.

CUMNOCK AND DOON VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

BRANCH EXCHANGE AND CIRCULATION LIBRARIAN

at the District Library Headquarters, Cumnock. Salary Scale AP 11-11, £3,085-£3,125, plus annual increments up to £520 per annum with placing according to age, qualifications, and experience.

Applicants should be Chartered Librarians but applications will be considered from persons who have completed Part II (Final) of the Librarian Association Examination.

A casual car user's allowance will be payable.

Applications giving full details as to age, education, qualifications and experience, and two references should be sent to the Council Office, Lurgan, Cumnock, Tyrone, Scotland, not later than 10th June, 1978. Canvassing disqualifies.

Closing date 7 July 1978.

WELLSOME INSTITUTE FOR THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

Applications are invited for two full-time positions in the newly-formed Centre for the History of Contemporary Medicine.

The function of the Centre's staff will be to seek out, collect and catalogue the personal papers and professional records of two-teenth-century medical practitioners.

One of the positions is for a graduate, either of History or the social sciences. An ability to type and possession of a current driving licence would be advantageous. Both posts are subject to a two-year probationary period.

During salaries will be at a point on the University Lecturers' Scale, including London Allowance (£4,110 to £7,785).

Applicants, who should include outlines of their research and the names of two referees, should send their applications to the Director, Wellsome Institute for the History of Medicine, 105 Euston Road, London NW1 2AP.

Closing date: 28th June 1978.

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METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF STOCKPORT

POST 1

PRINCIPAL OFFICER

(Area Services and Staffing)

POST 2

PRINCIPAL OFFICER

(Central and Bibliographical Services)

PO1 (A-8), £5,823 to £8,241

These two officers, between them, are responsible to the Assistant Director (Culture) for the Library Services of the Culture Department. The duties of the two posts have been altered so that they are, effectively, new jobs. The whole library service is currently being reviewed, and the persons appointed will be expected to assist in this review.

POST 1

Responsible for the management of the Branch and District Libraries, together with overall responsibility for personnel matters for the department. Applications are invited from Chartered Librarians with wide experience at a senior level in public libraries and with particular knowledge and experience of personnel work.

POST 2

Responsible for the management of the central operational services and of the bibliographical services unit, together with overall responsibility for the stock of all libraries. Applications are invited from Chartered Librarians with wide experience at a senior level in public libraries and with particular knowledge and experience of bibliographical services.

Casual-user's car allowance available.

To discuss post, telephone Neil A. Simpson, 061-480 4949, extension 180.

Application form and further details from: Director of Recreation and Culture, Town Hall, Stockport. Telephone as above.

Closing date: June 23, 1978.

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The Polytechnic of North London

School of Librarianship

Temporary Lecturer Grade II

Applications are invited for a temporary appointment of one year's duration to teach certain aspects of mathematics, statistics and quantitative methods to students of Librarianship at undergraduate and graduate levels.

Applicants should have qualifications in one of the fields and preferably, but not essentially, some experience of library or information work.

The appointment is from September 1st, 1978, later starting date may be agreed, and will terminate not later than the 31st August, 1979.

Salary scale: £4,503 to £6,960 including London Allowance.

Application form and further details from: Education Officer, The Polytechnic of North London, 100 Tottenham Road, London N7 8DB.

Informal enquiries to Edward Dudley, Head of School Librarianship, 207-225 Essex Road, London N1 1RN.

Phone No 01-607 2789 Ext. 2410, 2413.

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